

# Mr. Dooley on the Return of the Fleet

By F. P. DUNNE

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"Well, sir," said Mr. Dooley, "what's the American navy comin' to anny- how?"

"Have ye been readin' what th' naval experts have to say?" asked Mr. Hennessy.

"It isn't that," said Mr. Dooley. "Iv course ivrybody knows that th' ships are in tur-rble condition. Th' ammy-nition bins won't hold annything but th' crew, th' guns are as lible to go off fr'm wan end as th' other an' 'tis a well-known fact discovered by a bookkeeper in a shoe store who's a naval expert whin business is slack an' he has nawthin' important to think about that before they sailed a school iv mackerel was found firmly imbedded in th' six-inch armor plate. 'Twas with a sad heart that me an' me frind th' naval expert seen th' fleet coahlin' up an' loadin' with smokeless powder an' twelve-inch shells an' sailin' away on their grand errand iv Peace. We expected to read iv thim bein' towed into Bonies Alrs by a lumber hooker or pulled off th' rocks at Hong Kong by a Chinese junk or slammed against th' coast iv terrible Terry del Fooyga an' th' officers an' crews biled in an iron pot be th' simple natives iv a hospital land. But, Hennessy, strange as it may seem to thim that know th' dreadful facts, nawthin' happened to th' doomed armada, as us naval experts calls it amongst ourselves, on'y rollickin' on th' blue waters iv th' Passyfic or shakin' th' light fantastic leg ashore or shootin' holes in canvas targets that had been named in honor iv a friendly nation after th' ships iv th' Jap-nese navy. An' here th' fleet home again an' safe in harbor an' th' Jolly tars settin' with a lass on their knee an' a glass iv knock-out drops in their hand, tellin' th' story iv th' cruise whin havin' their pockets picked. 'Tis a good thing th' Japs didn't know that amny good baseball pitcher car put an in-shoot through th' thickest part iv th' biggest iv th' boats. That th' ships

have come home at all is due to th' patriotism iv th' naval experts who refused to publish to th' wurld th'ir secret knowledge iv th' helpless condition iv our navy an' on'y confided it to th' magazines.

"But it wasn't about that I was goin' to talk to ye, Hennessy. No, sir. It's a far more seerious matter thim that ye know what sherry wine is. Ye've heard iv it anyhow. 'Tis a drink that is given to women that don't know anny better. Mind ye, I don't say annything against it. Par be it fr'm me in my business to speak iv it anny form. No doubt it has its good qualities, an' it kouten be th' tub might have good effects. If th' doctor said to ye, 'Ye must have off drink in anny form except perhaps a little sherry wine befor meals,' ye wud tell ye'r little boy to take th' coal scuttle an' have it filled with sherry at th' Dutchman's on th' corner. But 'tis far fr'm bein' an invigoratin' booze. After th' beautiful ladies iv France have taken off their shoes an' stockin's an' danced out iv a grape th' various kinds iv drink that th' prople love, poetry, oratory, patriotism, courage, audacity, wife-beating an' all th' other manly vices, somebody takes whin's left, squeezes it in a press, adds three thousand parts iv wather an' some brown sugar an' calls it sherry. It is what Dock O'Leary calls 'alcohol in its least dangerous form.' I advise all me patients to take it," says he. "Ye never read in th' paper about a man inflamed be long potations iv sherry wine shootin' a policeman. It is too bad that our people cannot accustom themselves to light wines like th' continental nations. Give me a thimbleful iv rye, I have a chill," says he.

"That's sherry over there on th' third shelf to th' right. It's th' same bottle I started with whin I moved into this place in th' winter iv eighteen hundred an' I don't know whin. An' I expect to keep it till I furnish a day's congalinal

enjoyment to Gavin th' undertaker. Wan day about twenty years ago I thought I had a customer fr it, but before I end get th' cork out he switched.

"Now that I've told ye what sherry wine is like an' that it's so harmless that it don't do annybody anny good, what will ye think whin I tell ye that there are men in our navy that are addicted to th' use iv this effeminate perfume? An' not on'y that, but it gives thim th' same glorious effects that are procured amongst voters by rale drink. 'Tis so. I say it with sorrow, but 'tis so. Th' other day I picked up a pa-aper an' read th' headlines: 'Cruise nearly ended. Gallant fleet mangled be splindid officers an' crews on its way home. Country waitin' feverishly to honor thim. Captain court martialed fr drunkenness.'

"'A-ha,' says I, 'now I'll read something worth readin'.' An' I plunged into th' story with th' eagerness that ivry honest man feels at th' prospect iv seein' a hero hauled off his perch. I looked fr a grand story iv drink. 'Th' sailors are th' boys to do it up fine,' says I. Me idee iv a sailor was a man that cud enuff th' state iv Kentucky without winkin' an eye, a man that niver aks except between drinks, a man friver arid, a Sahara iv a man that wud on'y bloom be constant irrigation. What quantity-wud cheer such a man? Or was there in far-off Africa some subtle benzine that wud make our own Caucasian suds seem thim indeed?

"Well, there was th' story all spread before th' constant reader in th' most kindly fashion. Th' captain was a good an' hon'rabl man. His crew liked him. He sailed his ship well. He was respected be his fellow officers. He wore his uniform with honor an' pride. All this made his downfall th' better readin'. Th' captain went ashore to a dinner give be th' representative iv Amer-ica's mighty power in Tangiers, out

brave consul, Abijah Gummars, an' th' watchful eye iv th' admiral seen that our hero was far too cheerful fr such a company. He showed all th' signs iv exhilaration; his eyes were sleepy, his gait onsteady an' his face wore a pleasing expression iv onreaching anger mingled with despair. An' what d'ye think brought him to this happy condition? Ye niver cud guess it. Not slathers iv th' household ammonia that makes strong men weep. None iv th' valliant nitro-glycerin that ye an' I, Hennessy, use to drive dull care away with. No, sir. Th' captain confessed it all. Before lavin' th' ship he had taken wan small glass iv sherry wine! No wonder he was court martialed fr conduct onbecomin' to an officer an' a gentleman.

"'Tis awful. It spiles me whole idee iv a naval hero. It takes all th' romance out iv sea fightin'. Can ye think iv Nelson or Barry or Farragut atin' a chooclat eclair an' a glass iv malted milk an' goin' into action with th' inimy? No, sir. 'Twas 'Pipe all hands to grog. Give th' bulleys plenty iv rum an' they'll fight like wildcats. A glass iv brandy with ye, admiral. Shake out th' top gallant mainsail, me hearties. Hard, hard apout with th' hellum, ye son iv a rum punchin'. Close in on thim. Give thim another broadside. A pitcher iv brandy, boy. Boord thim now fr th' honor iv th' land we love an' th' loot in their hold. Ah, this is a glorious day. There goes me other leg, but who cares?"

"Sure, I think in thim days an' that kind iv fightin' a man had to be crazy or iv drink to go on at all. It was close wurruk, a kind iv rough an' tumble on th' sea. If Hogan's frind, Nelson, wasn't drunk he was crazy. Why, in wan battle, Hennessy, th' admiral that was his boss flags him not to fire, Nelson had on'y wan eye, th' other glim havin' been knocked out in a row, an' he puts his spy glass to th' extinct lamp an' says he, 'What talk is this ye

have about signals. I don't see none. Go on an' fire,' says he. He looked on th' Spanish or th' Frinch or th' Eytalian or th' Dances or annybody he was sint to fight, as his personal inimy, just th' same as wan iv me longshoreman customers does a frind that gets into an argument with him about polly-ticks. An' there was that fellow John Paul Jones. Did ye ever hear about him? Well, sir, he was in a fight with an Englishman an' his own boat was sinkin'. 'Boys,' says he, 'I wud be on-safe to stay here anny longer an' be drowned,' says he. 'But where will we go? Ah, an idee strikes me. We'll step aboard th' inimy's boat,' says he. An' they done so with seoids in their teeth an' their pigtails flyin' in th' air. 'D'ye realize that this is my boat?' says th' English captain. 'Where else wud ye have us go after th' latin?' ye give us,' says John Paul Jones, tappin' him abast th' ear with a belayin' pin. An' to make th' ship more homelike, he histed th' American flag an' sailed to France to talk it all over with Benjamin Franklin, an' he lived in Paris fr a good many years an' was a great man with th' ladies an' sarved in th' Rooshyan navy an' was threatened badly be his grateful country an' died an' was buried, no wan knew where onth' th' American Ambassador discovered his remains whin many people don't think was him at all but a Frinch corpse, an' brought it back to America to be buried again. An' a lot iv difference it makes to John Paul Jones.

"Yes, sir, thim were th' days an' thim were th' boys. It's a different matter now whin th' battles or th' bluffs iv th' wurruk are being fought out between navies that look like collections iv cook stoves. There can't be anny rale feelin' about it. Ye can't get mad about an inimy that ye can't see except through a pow'rful tellyscope. There's no such thing as a broadside or grappling with th' inimy or streamin' over th' side with a cutlass in ye'r mouth an' a pis-

tol in ye'r hand. Th' captain, who's a member iv th' Young Men's Christian Temp'rance Union, whin he's ashore, takes a peek through his glass an' figures out that th' inimy is about six miles away. He whistles down a chute to a lift'nant in a steel safe to begin frin'. Th' lift'nant says to th' cap'n iv th' gun crew, 'What is th' trajectory?' 'Two be four, professor,' says th' mariner. 'Th' cosine iv eight plus th' cubic root iv th' ballistic power minus atmospheric resistance, eight times six is forty-eight, all right. If ye fire four miles ahead iv where ye natchrally think th' inimy is an' a mile an' a half above him ye may an' thim again ye may not, hit him,' says th' lift'nant. And th' chances are he won't know whether he's landed a punch or not till he gets home an' reads th' pa-aper. War is more iv a business thim it used to be. Wanst it was poetry; now it's mathematics. Th' most important men in th' modern army are a corn doctor an' a veterinary surgeon. Th' g'nral niver looks to see whether a sojer has a fearless eye, but is mighty particular to find out whether he has good feet. An' ye'd as soon thrust an expert accountant who drank as a naval officer. Maybe 'tis a good thing, Hennessy. Th' less war is like a picnic iv th' Longshoreman's union th' less wars there'll be. I wudden't mind goin' to war with John Paul Jones. I've often seen me self stripped to th' waist an' in me bare feet, with a cutlass firmly grasped in me jaws an' a couple iv pistols in me hands, hoppin' over th' side iv a British man iv war, chasin' some Sassanach up a mast an' havin' John Paul Jones say to me, 'Me brave fellow, a glass iv grog with ye.' But I can't pitcher meself enyjin' shootin' a gun at an inimy I can't see under a commander who figures out his orders with a lead pencil an' a piece iv paper out iv a trigonometry an' whin th' battle is over giv' me a bottle iv Koomys to cili-brate th' victory with.

"Do I think they done right with th' captain to show him up before th' wurruk because he cudn't carry his glass iv sherry? Faith, I don't know. I'm th' old-time kind iv a warrior an' I don't know th' needs iv th' modern navy. If I had been th' admiral an' this was an old la-ard that I'd been messmates with an' played cards with an' grumbled about th' dog's life on sea with an' he'd scandalized Mither Gummars's party be thrippin' over his ankles an' goin' to sleep with his head in th' soup, I prob'ly wud steer him to bed an' th' next day I'd send fr him an' say, 'Cap, I don't know whether it was th' sherry ye had last week or th' pickles ye ate at dinner, but ye were a little off th' key last night. Not much, mind ye. No wan that didn't know ye wud notice it. But I saw whin ye offered to raste the sultan iv Morocco fr th' cigars that something had disagreed with ye an' as an old frind I'd say to ye to go a little slow or I'll have to put gyes upon ye'r ankles an' stow ye away in th' basement iv th' ship. That'll be all,' I'd say. But I may be wrong. Maybe 'tis a good thing fr th' navy to advertise all over th' wurruk that an officer has stubbed his toe. Anyhow, 'tis a more modern punishment thim keel-hauling an' hurts more an' lasts longer."

"D'ye think th' cruise iv th' fleet was a good thing fr th' peace iv th' wurruk?" asked Mr. Hennessy.

"No," said Mr. Dooley. "But it was a good thing fr th' politeness iv th' wurruk. Didn't ye ever notice how respectful ivrybody is to ivrybody else in a town where ivry man carries a gun?"

## ACCORDING TO HOYLE.

(Success Magazine.) "See here, Mister Casey," said Pat to the tax assessor, "shore and ye know the goat isn't worth \$8." "O'ra sorry," responded Casey, "but that is the law." Producing a book, he read the following passage: "All property abutting on Front street should be taxed at the rate of \$2 per foot."

# A Cross Hook for Science

By SEWELL FORD

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As I says to Sadie, when she springs her proposition about our puttin' in the big end of the week down to Windy-mere, "Why go to the muck?"

"I know," says she, "the Twombly-Cranes do have such crowds! Every one is going. But that's just the point. We don't want to be left in town over Sunday all alone, do we?"

Notice any emptiness of that kind yesterday, or were they runnin' the subway trains as usual? Well, well! You'd thought to hear the talk of that bunch that New York, with them away, would grow to weeds. But they're an entertainin' lot of time destroyers. Sure, I promises Sadie I'll come down Saturday afternoon.

"Cheer!" says Sadie Joe when he hears where I'm headed for. "You'll have the swell time, hey? What do they do down there?"

"Does I?" says I. "Why, we toss twenty-dollar pieces at the goldfish and hunt diamond backed terrapins with squirt guns."

"Air cheer!" says he. "I'm a fruitie one, ain't I? Straight goods now, what kind of joy do they hand out most?"

See? Swiftly has an idea these big house parties is something of a cross between a clam bake and a free circus, with a new event on the program every half-hour, and the folks that's givin' it circulate round askin' if every one is happy. How was I goin' to explain to him that it's a go-as-you-please, and that you gets just the sort of fun you dig out for yourself? Why, I've known people who put in the whole time eating and drinking in their rooms, while others will go to a place just to write letters, or because they like the cookin'.

"Take Norry Newell, that I runs into almost as soon as I lands. It was the stables brought him down to Windy-mere. You give him half a dozen of them high steppin' horses to drive, and a crowd of passengers behind him on top of the tallyho, and he's perfectly happy. He'll do it all day long, from Monday morning to Sunday night."

Nice boy, Norry. When he has a double handful of reins and whip he looks as intelligent as the average cabman; and when he's got himself into evenin' clothes, and has seventeen kinds of food to eat, and nineteen kinds of things to drink, he can sit around stary-eyed and give as fine an exhibition of a human sausage as ye'd want to see. Did I say sausage? Make it blood pudding; it fits better with his complexion. "Hello, Norry!" says I. "How're they runnin'?"

"Huh!" he grunts. "Green leaders and a lame wheeler! Lost thirty minutes on the Short Hills trip."

"That's an awful thing!" says I. "And your time so valuable!"

"It's a lot of satisfaction, Joslin! Norry! When you spring a real good one, maybe he'll blink twice. He never moves an eyelid this time; but waddles off to the smokin' room. I pushes through the gang, findin' some that I know, and finally comes across Sadie and Mrs. Purdy-Pell havin' a confidential chat in a corner."

"Couldn't do this at home, I suppose?" says I. "Is it anything you can talk about before me?"

"Oh, Shorty!" says Sadie, givin' me the frin' tackle. "You've got here at last, have you? Well, something perfectly horrid has happened!"

"Ah-ha!" says I, lookin' wise. "Some of the help has made love to it, eh? Called in the sleuths yet?"

"Oh, I dislible to send for detectives," says Mrs. Pell, "and yet—"

"I know," says I. "Much in it?"

"Only six or eight fifty-dollar bills," says she.

"Oh, pooh!" says I. "Pooh two or three times! What's a little matter of three or four hundred to—"

"That'll do from you, Shorty," says Sadie, cuttin' in sarcastic. "You don't happen to know that the purse itself is worth four or five times as much as that. Of course, something must be done about finding it. The question is, What?"

Maybe you think I answered that off-hand. Well, I didn't. The best I could do was to let on to Mrs. Purdy-Pell that it was tough on her, but I couldn't work up much excitement over it. Folks that lug around such expensive knickknacks as gold purses stuffed with yellow bills, and leaves 'em reckless, deserves to have 'em lifted. Besides, there was always the chance of its not being lost at all, and that it might turn up of itself. My gentle hint along this line only gets me jumped on by both ladies in chorus; so I ducks and says maybe, I'll think of something before dinner.

Course, the sensible thing to do in a case of that kind is either to make your boiler loud and prompt, or else let it slide over without makin' a single peep. But they don't do either. They calls in this first one of their special friends, and then that, and buzzes over it in private; and the result is that inside an hour the tale is all over the place, with everybody lookin' slant eyed at the servants and whisperin' things behind their hands.

You know how such reports'll spread. It don't lose anything by bein' passed on, either. By the time I've changed my clothes and come down stairs again, I see Pinckney lookin' kind of puzzled, and he wants to know what's all this about Mrs. Purdy-Pell's bein' choiced by the butler and robbed of all her jewels.

"It means that it's time the facts had a show down," says I. "Come on with me till I find Sadie."

She and Mrs. Pell are surrounded five deep, holdin' an expiation powwow, and just as we arrives on the scene Mrs. Twombly-Crane shows up lookin' red and flustered. She wants to know what's the grand stew, and a dozen of 'em all starts talkin' at once, givin' her as many different yarns, and Mrs. Purdy-Pell is on the point of bustin' loose in tears, when an assistant butler tips in, carryin' the missin' article on a silver tray. He reports that it's been picked up on the lawn close to the wall of the west wing, and looks like it had been dropped out of some of the guest chamber windows.

"There!" says everybody. "Of course, you laid it on the ledge and it slipped off."

"But my room is in the east wing," says Mrs. Pell, takin' the purse, "and—and the money is gone!"

Sure enough, it's as empty as a poor box. Now here's a mystery that gets tied up in a knot. How could a purse dropped out of an east window land on the west side of the house? And if it had been pinched by one of the help, why should they chuck a two-thousand dollar bag after they'd run the risk of gettin' it? Pinckney wants to know what kind of money it was.



She steers him straight for the lily pond.

board of the family. Sure, Perky's a head of hers; but of course he's been out of the swim since that last scrape of his. They say he's over at Monte Carlo cappin' for the game. He was a sizzler while he lasted, though. Colonel Duke Decker? No, he was an uncle, and the less said about his record the better. Good old Kentucky! She's supplied the metropolitan market with a lot of perfect gems just like this Decker brand. But Dottie's in a class by herself. And say, to look at her when she's quiet, with them big round eyes of hers givin' the baby stare, you'd think she'd dropped out of a stained glass window somewhere, and her wings had stuck to the frame.

It ain't often she's quiet, though. And when she's in action—whew! Don't ask me to do the describin'. She's a pink and white streak of devilry and dimples, and if you can guess what she's goin' to spring next you've got second sight. Whenever any of the real rapid push start to make up a bunch for one of them freak dinner parties—the kind with bathin' suit and champagne—Dottie's name goes down first.

And how she manages to travel with that crowd on the slim leavin's of old man Decker's pile is somethin' you'd better get our friend Eddie Wharton to explain. But Dottie does it. Sadie hints that her bridge winnings might help; but from all I've heard, that ain't an income you can depend much on.

"Oh-h-h-h!" says two or three in chorus. "Why, don't you remember that—"

"Sh-h-h-h!" says another. "Here she comes now."

Honest, that was all there was to it, and I was as far up in the air as any of 'em; but I'll bet there wa'n't one in the bunch that didn't look straight towards the girl that comes slippin' through the room. It's Dottie Decker. Don't know Dottie, eh? Well, you've

Three minutes later there's a rush for the front porch to watch her make Norry, with the bit in his mouth, caper through the flower beds. Even them that was shocked couldn't help doublin' up when she steers him slant into the lily pond and they both splash through it.

"That's goin' some!" says I. "It's going altogether too far," says Sadie. "She's making a perfect fool of Norry Newell."

"All he lacked was finishin' touches," says I. "But what's this by-play about Dottie and the fifties?"

"That's just a bluff, though. She's dyin' to tell it to some one, and don't dare give it out flat to anybody but me. Seems that a few of the whist fiends had been improv'in' the fine afternoon by stayin' inside and doublin' on trumps. They'd rung Dottie in to fill out, and as usual she plinged heavy, to make up for what she'd been touched for the night before. But she was up against it, and was stung harder than ever. Then, when it comes time to settle, she says she's left her checkbook in her room, and dashes off after it. When she comes back, though, instead of writin' out her lavender slips, she flashes a roll and pays up in cash. And the roll was a new fifties!"

"Piffle!" says I. "You don't think Mrs. Purdy-Pell's cornered the big bill output, do you? Besides, Dottie—"

"Oh, of course you don't believe she did it!" says Sadie. "None of the men do. It was directly under her window that the purse was found."

business was the sensation of the hour. Maybe there was two in the whole crowd that didn't have a hand in the debate. One was Dottie herself, and the other was Norry Newell; for it seems he'd been gradually developin' a bad case of smash on Dottie durin' the last few weeks, followin' her from place to place like a tame elephant, and even hearten' his fancy stock farm to tag around after her. And the only notice he ever got from her was when she could think of some fool stunt to play on him.

Ever see a lot of women with somebody's choice like that to talk over? Don't they enjoy themselves, though? Why, some that hadn't swapped a word with each other for months got their heads together and compared suspicions, as chummy as you please. And the line up is just as Sadie predicts: the men was all for bringin' in the verdict of not guilty without leavin' the box, while the women are ready to believe anything of Dottie, providin' it's bad enough.

And then, right in the middle of the mess, Pinckney has his brilliant thought about callin' in Professor Switzerkase, the same bein' a college duck that had invented a patent ball bearin' thought tester.

The professor's bein' on hand just shows how many different kind of folks you can have at once in them big country houses without their interferin' with each other. There was the bridge fiends, that didn't think or do much else than sit around the green tables; then there was the horse bunch, includin' the pony polo artists; and besides the gasoline burners there was the lawn tennis experts.

But the professor is there on business. He's been lugged down by a nephew of Mr. Twombly-Crane's with the idea of settin' up his apparatus and doin' some experimentin' among the

smart set. Seems he'd just got the thing in workin' order, and the nephew was out makin' a call for volunteers. "We didn't know what it was all about; but we pushed into the library with a lot of others and takes a look. The professor, he's a big, husky lookin' German highbrow, with a fine set of rosy face whiskers and a Duke of York accent. On the table he has something that looks like a brass barrel head set on a lot of little steel balls, so it would move easy. Underneath was some clockwork, and a sheet of ruled paper that had a pencil workin' over it. His game is to have some one rest their hand on the brass plate while he asks 'em a series of fool questions. Pinckney, he's the first victim, and the performance runs something like this:

"I give you the word 'cherry,'" says the professor, pullin' out a stop watch. "What does that bring to your mind?"

"Cocktail," says Pinckney, prompt and cheerful.

"Now I give you the word 'dinner,'" says the professor. "Of what does it remind you?"

"Another cocktail," says Pinckney.

"Ach!" says the professor. "Vat a loafly imagination! Vonce more, now! I give you the word 'glub.' Vat, if you please, does that bring to your mind?"

"More cocktails," says Pinckney.

"Bah!" says the professor, shovin' back his watch. "Such a foolishness! To liberly conduct an experiment I must have a prafn, not a third!"

"Oh, Lulu!" says I. "Now will you be good?"

But the professor ain't grouchy about it. He goes on to explain to the other chine works, and it would have been mighty interestin', I expect, if you could have told what he meant. I gathers, though, that if he had some sort of a crook to work on he could put 'em through a course of sprouts that would make him write a record of his confession without knowin' it. Kind of an automatic confession machine, was, according to his description.

"Vat is truly needed, you see," says he, "is a suspected criminal."

"Oh, I say!" says Pinckney. "And suppose the suspected person should be innocent; would the machine prove that, too?"

"Shust the same," says he. "By Jove," says Pinckney. "Professor, he gives out a string of words, like 'fan,' 'dog,' 'candy,' and so on, and she comes back with the words they made her think of, one at a time. But in amongst the lot are some jokery words. The first was 'bridge whist.' It don't bother her much. She just laughs and comes back with 'Making it without.' When he gets to 'purse,' she flushes up a little and says, 'Why—er—empty, of course!'"

"Ah!" says he, snappin' the watch. "Pretty soon he comes to 'dressin' table,' and that's a jab that gets her still more fussed. See his scheme? In amongst the other words he has all the connectin' links of the tragedy. And say, hanged if it didn't give me the lumpy throat, standin' there listenin' to the crowd in him as he scared, helpless was that stuff had me goin'."

"Now," says the professor, "I give you the word 'window,'" and at that she turns the color of a new fourth car.

"Why, how silly!" says she, jumpin' up. "What are you drivin' at, any way? I—I won't answer any more of your stupid old questions, so there!"

"So?" says the professor, pullin' out the sheet of paper and squintin' at it. "Vot a curious young lady! But we haf here the record. Peaufull, peaufull! It is a complete confession! I could brove it in a court of law."

And when you came to figure it out, he had an argument. You see, while her hand is on the brass plate, the paper underneath in movin' around all the time, and the lead pencil is gettin' in its work. Now, when he puts a word like 'candy,' she comes back with an answer in a second and a half, and her hand never shakes a bit. But when she strikes 'purse,' it takes her five seconds to think of an answer, and the line gets all jiggly.

"Well, there we was, all lookin' at Dottie, and Dottie starin' back at us, and nobody knowin' what to say; when Mr. Twombly-Crane, seein' that things was lookin' serious, jumps in to smooth matters out.

"Very curious," says he; "but no doubt Miss Dottie can furnish a satisfactory explanation of—"

"She can't!" says Mrs. Purdy-Pell, her eyes snapping. "She can't! It was made an example of; it's bad enough to have her cheat at cards; but when it comes to lettin' her—"

"Hold on there!" sings out some one. It's Norry Newell. He pushes to the front with his jaw set and his chin up, and it's the first time I ever saw him when he looked like he was real wide awake. "Beg pardon," he goes on, "but I'll answer for Miss Decker. She never did anything of the sort, you know."

"Oh, I say," says Pinckney, "don't be an—"

But Norry only shoves him to one side and scowls around to see if any one wants to dispute him.

"But the record!" says the professor, wavin' the paper. The record shows—"Boosh!" says Norry, makin' a grab at it; and before any one can make a move he's ripped it into a dozen pieces and scattered 'em on the rug. Then he turns to Mrs. Purdy-Pell and tosses her a rye. "Allow me, Mrs. Pell," says he. "Found it on the grass, you know. Now let's have no more of this blasted rot about Dottie. I don't like it, that's all."

"Oh, Norry!" says Dottie. "You're a dear boy, aren't you?" and with that she reaches up on tiptoes, gets a clinch around his neck, and proceeds to turn the sprinkler on his shirt front. It don't last long, though. While we're still got our mouths open, wonderin' how we can back out without trippin' ourselves up, she shuts off the tears and faces the bunch with that old baby stare of hers.

"Well?" says she. "If none of my dear friends has annything more to say about me, let's adjourn and cut for partners. I mean to play just three more rubbers, and then quit the game for good. Is any one comin'?"

And that's the way the great mystery about who pinched the gold purse fizzled out.

"So you and the professor and the mechanical sleuth was all stung, eh?" says I to Sadie afterwards.

"Perhaps," says she. "I'm glad it didn't end in annything worse, anyway."

"Funny, though," says I. "How Norry happened to run across that wad of fifties, wa'n't it?"

"Considering that Mrs. Pell lost only five odd," says Sadie.

"Phe-ew!" says I. "And me thinkin' he was a sheep walker! Say, think he'll ever land her?"

"She'll land him, if that's what you mean," says Sadie. "And it will serve him right, too."

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